Reasons against the rendering of *Our sworne and subscribed Confession of Faith.*

1.

IF wee should render Our subscribed Covenant, wee can not bee free of the great guiltinesse of Perjurie before God: for as We were drawn by necessitie to enter into a mutuall Union and Conjunction amongst Our selves, So are Wee bound not only by the Lawes of God and nature, but by Our solemne Oath and Subscription, against all dangerous or divisive motions, by all lawfull meanes to promove and observe the same without violation, and not suffer our selves by whatsoever suggestion, allurement, or terror, directly or indirectly to be divided, or drawn from it: And it is too manifest, that no motion can be more divisive upon the one side, nor can we upon the other part more directly give way to division, then willingly, and with our own consent to render the band of our union and conjunction to be destroyed, that no testimony thereof may be any more extant.

2. We would distinguish (except wee will deceave our selves) between *Res juratæ*, that which is sworn, and *Juratio* our swearing thereof: for although all the generall and particular points contained in our subscribed Covenant were to be insert in another Covenant, to be made by the expresse commandement of authority; yet to render our sworne Confession, were both to passe from our swearing thereof, *as si res esset integra*, as if we had never swome and subscribed; and also to destroy that which we have beene doing, as a thing unlawfull, and to be repented of. It were not only to make our oath to be no oath, our subscription no subscription, and our testimony no testimony, but really to acknowledge and Confesse our selves in this to have beene transgressours: so that we can neither clame any right to the promise of God, nor think our selves obliged in any ducty to God by vertue of that oath. It must ever bee remembred that oaths and perjuries are multiplied, not onely according to the diversity of the things that are sworne, but according

to the ſweareing of the ſame thing at diverſe times; ſo oft as we ſweare and ſubſcribe the ſame thing, by ſo many oaths and obligations are we bound unto God, and conſequently the rendering of our ſubſcription, is the renunceing of that individuall band and obligation, although poſſibly by another we may ſtand bound or ſworne.

3. Our voluntary renewing of our Covenant with God, carieth greater evidence of a free ſervice to God, then if it had beene done by expreſſe commandement of authority: Becauſe the power of God makeing his people ſo willing, and the readineſſe and ſincerity of the people is ſo much the more manifeſt; like as the Lord from heaven hath teſtified his acceptance by the wonderfull workings of his Spirit in the hearts both of paſtors and people, to their great comfort and ſtrengthning in every duety, above any meaſure that ever hath beene heard of in this land; And therefore to give any token of recalling the ſame were unthankfully to miſregard the work of God, and to quite all the comforts and corroborations that the people of God have to their great joy experienced at this time.

4. We have declared before God and the world, that this our Covenant, as it now ſtandeth ſworne and ſubſcribed, is lawfull and neceſſary, that it is done in obedience to the commandement of God, conforme to the practiſe of the godly, and according to the laudable example of our religious progenitors, who by the like oath have obliged us to the ſubſtance and tenor of this: And therefore if we ſhould now by rendering our Covenant undo that which we have done, we ſhould deny the commandement of God, condemne the examples in ſcripture, and the practiſes in this kirk; and precondemne all like commendable courſes to be taken by poſterity in the like exigence.

5. No Covenant in things civile can be altered or reſcinded without conſent of the parties with whom it is made; But Our Covenant is a religious Covenant made with God and amongſt Our ſelves, and therefore can not be rendered without the expreſſe conſent of the meaneſt of all the ſubſcribers; who juſtly for their comfort may crave of Us all the beneſite and performance thereof.

6. There

6. There is no appearance that ſuch as affect the prelats and their courſes, will be moved to ſweare and ſubſcribe all the parts of this Covenant: As for inſtance, To labour by all meanes to recover the former puritie and libertie of the Goſpel, as it was eſtabliſhed and profeſſed, before the novations alreadie introduced, or to declare that they undoubtedly do believe, that the innovations and evils contained in Our Supplications, Complaints, and Proteſtations are abjured in the Confeſſion of Faith, as other heads of Poperie expreſſely contained therein.

7. Although all the points of the ſubſcribed Covenant were ratified by act of Parliament, yet could we not render the ſubſcribed Covenants: Becauſe acts of Parliament are changeable, and of the narure of a civile ratification: And it is neceſſarie, that this Our Oath being a religious and perpetuall obligation, ſhould ſtand in vigour for the more firme eſtabliſhing of religion in Our owne time, and in the generations following.

8. All the world may juſtly wonder at Our inconſtancie, and Our enemies who in their inſolencie are readie to inſult upon Us at the leaſt occaſion, would not ceaſe to mock at Us, and traduce Us as perjured Covenant-breakers, and troublers of the peace of the kirk and kingdome, without any neceſſarie cauſe.

9. Although We do not compare the Scriptures of God with a written confeſſion of faith, yet as the rendering of the Bible was the ſin of the *Traditores* of old, and a ſigne of the denyall of the truth contained therein: ſo the rendering of Our Confeſſion of faith, ſo ſolemnly ſworn and ſubſcribed, for ſtaying the courſe of defection, and for barring of poperie, and all other corruptions of religion, could be interpreted to be no leſſe, then a reall denyall of Our Faith before men, in a time when GOD calleth for the Confeſſion thereof.

10. Many fair promiſes have beene made, for not urging of articles already concluded, and for not troubling us with any further novations, which being believed, have enſnared many, and drawne them on to doe that which otherwiſe they would not have done, all which promiſes have beene broken and denyed, when the performance was craved: And why ſhall We not expect the like in this caſe, eſpecially where the challenge will be found to be more hard and difficile.

Objections answered.

Ob. 1. IT may be objected that the Confession of Faith being confirmed by the Kings Authoritie were much to be preferred to this, which seemeth to have no expresse commandement of authoritie.

Ans. 1. *Our Covenant wanteth not the warrand civile and ecclesiastical, which authorised the former Covenant.* 2. *Although rash and unadvised oathes be unlawfull, yet voluntary covenanting with God is more free service to God (as hath beene said before) then that which is commanded by Authoritie.* 3. *We ought not to do ill that good may come of it, and must resolve to choose affliction rather then iniquitie.*

Ob. 2. The rendering of the whole copies of the subscribed Covenant were a ready meane to remove all feares of the Kings wrath against the subscribers.

Ans. 1. *It is more fearefull to fall in the hands of the living GOD.* 2. *They wrong the King who threaten his good subjects with his wrath, for covenanting with God, in defence of religion and of his Majesties Person and Authoritie.* 3. *It were more righteous with GOD to turn his Majesties Heart and Hand against Vs, for dealing thus deceatfully in his Covenant.*

Ob. 3. If this be not granted his Majestie will grant neither Assemblie nor Parliament for establishing Religion, and setling the peace of the kirk and kingdome.

Ans. 1. *The good providence of God so sensible in this whole work from the beginning will incline the heart of so just and gratious a King, to deale more kindely and benignely with his good subjects.* 2. *We have law, reason, and custome for craving and expecting of those lawfull remedies of the grievances and feares of the whole kirk and countrey.*

Ob. 4. The end of the making of our Covenant was, that We might be delivered from the innovations of religion, which being obteined, our Covenant should cease, as having no further use.

Ans. 1. *As acts of Parliament against poperie did not abolish our former Confession of faith, wherein poperie was abjured, So Acts of Parliament to be made against these innovations can not make our Covenant to be unprofitable.* 2. *Although the innovations of religion were the occasion of making this Covenant, yet our intention was against those, and against all other innovations and corruptions to establish religion by an everlasting Covenant never to be forgotten.*